

THE DEAF CHILD. By Edith Whetnall, M.S., F.R.C.S., and D. B. Fry, Ph.D. (Pp. vii+237; figs. 62. 42s.) London: Heinemann Medical Books, 1964.

THE authors emphasise that the early diagnosis and intensive training of the residual hearing of the deaf infant gives the best possible results. Four to six months is the ideal age to start auditory training and a period of three years or more may be required before a final assessment of hearing is possible. The great problem of the deaf child is the interference with the learning of speech, the inability to communicate with others and consequent isolation and psychological upset.

The mechanism of normal speech production, reception and development is described in detail. The types, causes and pathology of deafness are set out clearly.

The section on the clinical examination and investigation of the deaf child describes the "free-field" tests of various age groups of infants and the audiometric tests of the older child, but warns of the danger of the amateur tests of hearing.

The final chapter explains the treatment and training of the deaf child. The different types of hearing aid and the fallacies in their use are explained, and mention is made of the special requirements of children with special types of hearing loss.

This excellent book, which is primarily written for doctors, will be of great help to otologists, paediatricians, Medical Officers of Health, and the many others who are concerned in the welfare of young children.

N. M. S.

MEDICAL SURVEYS AND CLINICAL TRIALS. Edited by L. J. Witts, M.A., M.D., D.Sc. Second Edition. (Pp. xi + 367; figs. 19. 42s.) London: Oxford University Press, 1964.

THE study of the mass aspects of disease and the exacting disciplines of epidemiological and biometric method applied to clinical research provides the stuff of this excellent book. Much that has been written from clinical, social, and laboratory observations of the natural history of disease provides hints of possible associations between illness and factors that are operative in the patient's background and experience. After the first indication of an association between two factors, the search for clues to causation becomes systematic. The accumulation of evidence from the medical survey is the first vital step in uncovering factors that significantly influence the prevalence of diseases in our populations. Professor Witts achieves well the aim of this book in displaying the common factors in several forms of clinical research in which the population, rather than the individual, is studied.

For this new edition much of the text and the bibliographics have been revised and brought up to date. The book is set out in two parts. The first part describes the methods appropriate for use in group research. This comprises not only the techniques of on-going and follow-up studies but covers the disciplines of prophylactic and therapeutic trials, and there is also a section concerned with operational research in medical care. The second part deals with the application of these methods in different areas of clinical medicine. In this it is illustrative rather than comprehensive and the book gains strength and interest from the way in which many of the contributors have drawn examples from their own research.

The layout is good and the price is modest. The book is aimed more towards the needs of the postgraduate than to the undergraduate medical student. Yet the issues dealt with in its content spread beyond the interests of the epidemiologist, the statistician or the student of social medicine: its disciplines are basic to medical science and its applications cannot be avoided in good clinical enquiry. This book is commended as essential reading for all postgraduate workers in any area of clinical research.

C. K.